

THE

(SECRET OF LONG LIFE.)

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THE
SECRET OF ^{WY}LONG LIFE.



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TO
LORD SAINT LEONARDS,

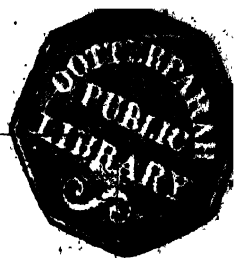
ONE OF THE FOREMOST OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS BROTHERHOOD

WHO POSSESS

THE SECRET OF LONG LIFE.

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THE
SECRET OF LONG LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY.

LENGTH OF LIFE wholly depends upon ideas. This aphorism has a double significance. There are men who live longer in a day than others in a year: for their brain is thronged with thoughts, as the halls of an emperor's palace are thronged with knights and ladies, with courtiers and minstrels and guards. There is never dulness in the stately edifice: even when night comes, and the festival is over, the nightingales sing in the pleasaunce, and the rivulets murmur a soft under-song.

All the hours are full of life and thought. He who lives thus, though he die in youth, has a far longer span of existence than the peasant-churl who ploughs and delves, eats and sleeps, unconscious of an idea ; even than the lucky aristocrat who has nothing to do save enjoy life, and who frequently finds himself extremely bored. And often it happens that the intense energy of a great thinker wears out his spirit's tenement ; that he dies young, having left his work half fulfilled. But he has lived long for all that ; he needs no pity from those who deem it the acme of good fortune to pass a torpid century on this earth's surface.

But there is a second meaning to the aphorism. Ideas prolong the actual duration of life. A great soul is full of power, and takes easily the accidents of the world. Ideas are the blossoms of the spiritual tree : when they are abundant and noble you know that it is in vigour of health. To think is to live.

The mind that is always active and unfatigued keeps the body out of mischief, keeps senses and nerves fully employed, renders stagnation impossible. The mathematician Sylvester claims for men of his own craft unusual longevity on this account. Here are his examples:—

Leibnitz	.	.	.	.	.	.	70
Euler	.	.	.	.	.	.	76
Lagrange	.	.	.	.	.	.	77
Laplace	.	.	.	.	.	.	78
Gauss	.	.	.	.	.	.	78
Plato	.	.	.	.	.	.	82
Newton	.	.	.	.	.	.	85
Archimedes	.	.	.	.	.	.	75
Pythagoras	.	.	.	.	.	.	90

Among nine men 711 years, an average of 79. Excellent good, but not purely to the credit of mathematics, since Pythagoras and Plato and Leibnitz were considerably more than mere mathematicians. Let me however compare with them an equal number of poets and painters.

Pindar	80
Sophocles	90
Euripides	75
Simonides	89
Chancer	71
Michael Angelo	90
Titian	99
Wordsworth	80
Landor	89

Among nine men 763 years, an average of nearly 85. Imagination beats calculation in this comparison. But of course Mr. Sylvester's mathematicians support my argument: and so do great lawyers like Lyndhurst and Lord St. Leonards (may he be a centenarian): and so do all men who occupy their minds, in whatsoever department of thought. Ideas are life. Their appearance is the sign of life, their generation is the source of life. The man without them is as dead as if he were carefully packed into a leaden coffin, and buried under one of those huge hideous monumental masses of stone which disfigure our churches and cemeteries.

I do not ask the reader whether he cares to investigate the secret of long life. If he does not—if he is one of those luckless mortals who are discontented with this beautiful resourceful world, and fancy they would like something better—I have no concern with him. I relish this world, and mean to stay in it as long as I can ; not from any fear of the future—which is unphilosophical, as I shall show hereafter—but because I hold that the soul, or self, can only be properly developed by thorough enjoyment of the present. The instant is ours. The past is past : *quod vides perisse perditum ducas*. The future will be ours in time ; it is an infinite estate, to which we are infallible heirs, and which reaches us in rapid instalments ; but to live on the expectation of it is to embarrass oneself with perpetual post-obits. Lose a moment never. Touch distinctly every priceless pearl of time as it passes through your fingers. Feel that it is a luxury to live. }

These things can only be accomplished by forming a true theory of life, and by keeping the mind always awake and active. Both are possible to men and women of average powers. Persons of powers below the average were clearly designed for a servile existence, and it is to be regretted for their own sakes when the caprice of destiny makes emperors of them, or peers of the realm, or justices of the quorum. But at such freaks of fortune wise men smile.



CHAPTER II.

WHAT IS LIFE?

Nec morti esse locum.—Virgil.

WHAT IS LIFE? We can approximate to a solution of this problem only through another. What is man? My answer is—A living indestructible spirit, inhabiting a material form which that spirit itself moulds and develops. Man possesses life so long as the atoms of his material form remain in their place; when they wear out, the spirit recommences its work, moulding for itself a new tenement. If you lived your life—if you are a stronger and purer spirit than when you entered on this planet—your new form, wheresoever it may happen to be placed in the universe, will be nobler than

that you now inhabit. If otherwise, why the consequence is obvious. The soul makes the body. It does it visibly here. High thoughts and noble impulses give light to the eye, music to the voice, life to the lips, grace to the form. A long series of such thoughts and impulses makes the soul stronger for its next effort; and the poet or sage who leaves this world (to write vaguely) after a great career will renew his youth, and reappear on this or some other scene, with a fairer form than ever, and with greater power to ascend towards the infinite summit of existence.

Where we shall pass the immeasurable future is no concern of ours; but it is our concern to know that our capacity for enjoying the future depends on our thoroughly enjoying the present. The word *enjoy* is the only one that will show what I mean. I use it to signify that absolute fulfilment of one's destiny which gives perfect pleasure.

It is quite possible—and to some minds easy—to enjoy life when you are doing disagreeable duties or mixing with disagreeable people. As to the locality of our future, why, the universe is very wide, and, if space be an immense cone, as would appear from the prevalence of ellipse and hyperbola in planetary and cometary motion, it must be long indeed before the best of us approach its apex. About such matters it is unwise to speculate. Indeed, when we have the most important truths that concern life in our possession, idle speculation about accidentals is infantile. We know *what* we are. Why should we guess as to *where* we are going? The soul is, and it consciously possesses faculties infinitely improvable. Fears and fancies of the future will therefore be dismissed by all whose intellectual health is sound; they will enjoy the instant, knowing that this is the true way to secure enjoyment of the unknown and unguessable future.

Life, in our limited definition, is that part of our infinite existence which connects the spirit with its present material habiliment; that connexion we have in common with innumerable other creatures. Man's first requirement is to apprehend his isolation; to see himself as a living spirit, with incalculable capacities, and without any superior save the Divinity. His next is to feel the intimate connexion between himself and all other inhabitants of earth. He shares that subtle ether, *life*, with the grass under his feet and the tree against which he leans, with the birds and insects that traffic in the air, with animals innumerable, with the whole human race. Are the two positions reconcilable? They must be since they coincide; but their reconciliation is only a case of the eternal difficulty about fate and free will, which I leave to Milton's devils and to Calvinists like Mr. Froude. Metaphysics and metaphysical theology are

sterile studies; the brain that works upon them is like a mill unsupplied with grain, which goes on grinding its own wheels together. What man has to understand is, that he is his own master, responsible mainly to himself for his own development. . . yet that he lives in a world whose inhabitants of all orders share with him the gift of life. The former feeling gives him power; the latter, love. These two, in combination, produce happiness.

Wordsworth's faith—

. . . that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes,

is perfectly true. The rose which your lady-love wears in her bosom has a share of the life which she and you possess. Whoever doubts this knows nothing of nature. Look from your window some March morning of east wind—Eurus, *ab urendo*—and you may tell the quarter whence it blows by the

tortured movement of the trees. They struggle with their aerial tormentor, and shudder as he smites them. Another day the sweet south is blowing; do you not see how the larch and lime palpitate with pleasure? . . . do you not hear the musical psithurism of the feathered foliage?

When the wind blows from the east
'Tis good for neither man nor beast;
When the wind blows from the west
It rocks the young birds in their nest.

Not beasts and birds only, but every tree and flower and blade of grass feel the difference between these opponent winds—the demon and the seraph of the air—and show their feeling palpably. It was the consciousness hereof which made the Greeks, in old heroic days, give every tree its nymph. Such beautiful old stories as that of Rhaicos and the Hamadryad reveal to us that sensitiveness to the subtle life of the world which existed in simpler times among a poetic people. There

are no oak nymphs, I grant you; but this noble oak tree has a life of its own, an individuality, and is akin to me and to you. It grasps with loving roots the earth whence our material form was made; it spreads its royal summits towards the sun, mysterious source of life and vigour. The Greeks, again, perceived the far-working power of the sun, and deified Apollo Hekaërgos. Do you think they meant nothing when they attributed to the sun-god the art of healing as well as the art of song? They knew that sunshine is the best medicine in the world, just as it is the best stimulant of the creative energy. Milton said that he could not write except between the vernal and the autumnal equinox. A poet may sing in winter now and then, at the latter end of a sea-coal fire and a flask of wine. For coal is fossil sunshine, drunken in by forests that perished myriads of years ago; and wine is liquid sunshine, caught in grape-globes that grew on the margin of Rhine or Marne or Charente.

Matthew Arnold says :

We mortal millions live alone.

And he compares us to islands in an infinite sea, severed by the waves eternally, yet mysteriously meeting at the base. Manifestly, no metaphor can adequately express the true state of the case, but this is a fair approximation. There is a basis of identity throughout the human race, but there is also an unalterable isolation. The higher a man's nature, the more sensitive he is to the connexion which exists between himself and all things that have life ; yet, at the same time, strange to say, the more complete is his actual isolation. Take the supreme instance within the world's experience hitherto. Shakespeare saw everything, knew all men, placed on the scene great kings and churchmen and soldiers, wild humourists and revellers, poetic dreamers, women of wit, of adventure, of romance, heroes and cowards, philosophers

and clowns, felt within him the sadness of sweet music, and read the hearts of daffodils and violets: Who knows Shakespeare? Who can form a conception of his character? His intimate friends, peers or poets, saw but a part of him; dimly apprehended that he was greater than they, but knew not how. The greater is not to be apprehended of the less. The highest spirits are the most isolated.

Let me briefly recapitulate. Man is a spirit, moulding his material form. As that form is perishable, the process is infinitely repeated; and the series of forms thus produced is an ascending or descending series, according to the character and tendency of the informing spirit. While spirit and form are connected, man is a sharer of the life of the world; he is akin to all living creatures and things. But he is also akin to the Divinity; and this is shown in the fact that he can stand intellectually alone, and find exercise for his highest faculties in commune

with the Invisible—or, as some would say, the Unknowable. How far it is possible for man to know the Divinity is a question which each person must solve for himself. When the Positivist assures me that there cannot be a God, because he cannot conceive one, I admit the force of the argument so far as he is concerned. If you met with a person colour-blind, you would not try to convince him that there is a difference between scarlet and crimson—both of which to his vision are a dingy black. If you encountered one of those gentlemen incapable of arithmetic, who maintain that the circumference of a circle is $3\frac{1}{2}$ times its diameter, you would not try to make him understand the process by which we approximate to π . Similarly, if there are philosophers who assure me that as they cannot conceive a God, or, indeed, see any necessity for a God, there therefore is no God, I shall not contradict them, any more than I would contradict Mr. Darwin

when he asserts that the founder of the house of Darwin was an anthropoid ape. When we connect Darwinism with positivism the inference is curious. Says the positivist, Humanity is God : says the Darwinist, Humanity is the gorilla : *ergo*



CHAPTER III.

MODES OF LIFE.

O what a life was in the world astir
When King Apollo was a villager!

I HAVE written that it is necessary to keep the mind always awake and active. How is this to be done in our present state of society by persons of average capacity? How is it even to be approached? To tell an ordinary man that long life depends on ideas, is like telling a sick labourer that he must have generous food and plenty of port wine. 'Where am I to find ideas?' is the obvious rejoinder. 'They don't grow in this part of the country.' Now although I write primarily for men (and women) who have ideas, and who therefore ought to live long, and whose long life would be enjoyment to them-

selves and advantage to the populace ; yet I cannot refuse to take pity on the lower order among us. After all, as Gladstone says, they are our own flesh and blood ; and although I prefer my spiritual to my sanguinical relations, I have no wish to leave these latter out in the cold.

My first thesis is, that in England there is now no mode of life healthy enough to secure longevity. We may roughly divide our modes of life into city life and country life ; but these have many shades and subdivisions. City life in Park Lane differs from city life in the Ratcliffe Highway ; country life by Windermere or on Dartmoor differs from country life in the small and unfragrant hamlet of Pigslush. For my argument, however, these subdivisions have no importance ; nor need I enter into any discussion as to whether there is higher civilization at Bath or at Manchester, among the spinners of cotton or the ploughers of land. Both forms

of life are useless for my purpose, and may be quickly cleared out of the way.

City life, at its highest—say in the choicest circles of London—is not devoid of ideas. A strong man—a Lyndhurst or a Palmerston—may take full share of that life, and attain a noble age. But I am not now dealing with giants. To men of ordinary constitution London is slow poison. Its widest squares are overcanopied by a dense cloud of smoke and evil air. Its streets are close ; its smells are strong ; its noises shatter the nerves. To have ideas in London, to keep the mind awake and agile, you must have power of the first order ; and if you have that, and know how to use it, you may live a century anywhere. But men of lower order usually stagnate in London, growing stupider every year ; only now and then one, like Lawrence Oliphant, flies off at a tangent, and seeks ideas in America—where unluckily they do not grow. There is a spurious affair that

resembles them, and deludes philosophers of the types of John Bright and of Hepworth Dixon.

Country life also suits men of a high class. The original genius works best in solitude, with the occasional pleasant interruptions of wife and children and friends. Any man who is a scholar, or even a student, and has an ample library, may live happily in the country, and live long. But what is the average man to do in the country? Where is he to get an idea? The public-house, where farmers drink vile beer and talk of beeves and corn; the village shop, where the old women talk scandal of their neighbours; the county paper, with its rigmarole paragraphs about the most trivial events; are the chief sources of rustic ideas. Who could live long on such mental food? And, if anybody could, would it be worth while? No: country life is just as useless as city life for my purpose.

There is an intermediate superior form of life which has to some extent existed in England in past days, and which it would be well to revive. Had I a million, I would spend half of it on the attempt. What I mean is village life—as men lived it in the village of Colonos. I imagine a certain number of people, from one thousand to five, living in well-built dwellings suited to their position, each dwelling having its appropriate ground—from the little garden and orchard of the cottage to the park of the country house. The same number of persons crushed into the streets and squares of a city must of necessity lead a far inferior life. In my ideal village there should be no cottages like one within sight of my own house—a hovel of two rooms, in which are crammed together a man and his wife, his grown-up son, his brother, his married daughter and her four children. Dwellings for all classes there should be : for my theory

is that such a village might be quite as important as any town, and that there would be room for every useful profession and trade, and vocation. There should be no lawyer, if it could be prevented. The village parliament, elected by universal suffrage (female as well as male), might also form a court of arbitration, to determine the disputes that unluckily must arise wherever human beings dwell together. As to doctors, appoint them officially, giving each a district with a liberal stipend ; but adding at the end of the year a bonus of generous amount when the health of the district was above the average. There would, of course, be crime in the ideal village—black sheep and families of scamps: such is humanity. Well, the incurable vagabonds I would assist to emigrate ; many a man who has come to grief in England would do well on the other side of the ocean. But for petty crimes, the larcenies of boys and girls, the small beginnings of vice, there

should be provided, not a gaol, but a reformatory—a place where hard work, hard fare, and severe discipline, would in many cases work a cure.

There should be in the village at least two clubs—one for the gentle, the other for the simple. The former needs no description; it would, of course, be organised on the principle of the best London clubs. The latter should supply my tradesfolk and peasantry with all they wanted in the way of refreshment at cost price; should give them a cheap substantial dinner, 'home-brewed ale, sound low-priced wines of France and Germany; should contain library, reading-room, smoking-room, and all other club requirements, fitted in a plain and simple, but by no means vulgar style. This being properly arranged, I do not know that the village need have any inn or tavern for its inhabitants' use; but I should incline to establish a place of reception for travellers,

managed by a paid officer, who would thus have opportunity of scrutinising suspicious arrivals. It should be an inn for travellers only, and all who came should be reported to the chief executive person—call him mayor, or warden, or reeve, or what you will—once every day.

In treating of this diminutive Eutopia, I leave religion out of the question. I would myself build a church, and would give free permission to sectaries to build conventicles for themselves. But what about education? and what about amusement? Well, I hope we should have a free grammar school of the best kind—a village Eton—where Greek and Latin and mathematics should be soundly taught, and cricket and rowing and football strenuously practised. Therewith must be connected middle and lower schools, for commercial education and the three R's respectively. But how about the girls? There's the rub. I am afraid all the tradesmen's

daughters would insist on being genteel and playing the piano. I think I would try for the girls of gentle blood a girls' grammar school, taught by university men; and leave them to learn what are styled 'accomplishments' at home. I should greatly like to try the American plan, of educating boys and girls together, for I think much harm often comes of their being sedulously kept apart; but there are many difficulties in the way. Assuredly girls should have strict and scientific training; they might all learn Latin and logic and geometry; a select few might even attack Greek and the calculus.

Then, as to amusement. First of all, I would have a village green, a fine wide common, where the elders might lounge on summer afternoons, while the boys played cricket, and the girls croquet, and the infants skipped and danced, and a pair or two of lovers roamed and whispered. I would build my village, so far as possible, round this

common ; the church, the schools, the clubs, the travellers' rest, the village hall, and other public edifices, should look down upon it ; so the amusement of the place would be open and general. Such an arrangement would stimulate society and discourage secrecy. Only the nobler natures, which are rare, can be trusted to take independent and isolated enjoyment.

I think it would also be a good thing to establish dramatic representations for the amusement of my village youth. While original capacity is rare, the imitative faculty is frequent ; and I can imagine no finer culture for girl and boy than to identify themselves with certain characters in Shakespeare and others of our greater dramatists. Nobody should take two characters ; I don't want to develop histrionic art among my youthful villagers ; I merely wish to give them an opportunity of developing their own characters by help of a great poet. My

theatricals should take place in the afternoon, as I hold that people should spend their evenings at home. Besides, evening representations require gas, and in my village there should be no gas. The glare of gas injures the eyesight, and its heat the brain. If men are to live long, they must avoid the hideous fumes of carburetted hydrogen.

A little histrionic amusement, properly done, would be of real value. The great poets dealt with typical characters. Romeo meets Juliet in every village in the world. Even fools find their place in Shakespeare. I should make admission to the village troop of actors decidedly difficult: I should require intelligent capacity to understand some one character, and sufficient articulation and emphasis to render that character tolerably. And, as I have said, to each actor or actress one character. The young gentleman who comes determined to give the world a new idea of Hamlet shall not be

allowed to sink into the gravedigger, or to expand into Jack Falstaff. The girl who becomes an Ophelia in order to adorn her dishevelled tresses with flowers shall not be permitted to turn Rosalind for the sake of the doublet and hose. The English drama is a great possession, which we who are its inheritors treat too carelessly; its immense power as an instrument of education has never been understood. Hazlitt has somewhere remarked that a man of one book is a dangerous controversial opponent; and I should say that a man who knows his Shakespeare thoroughly has an unusual amount of the highest culture. The Victorian age is far behind the Elizabethan; the city theatre has no drama, just as the city newspaper has no literature. Comedy was born in villages, as its name imports; and in my village it should assuredly be regenerated.

If, as I hope, there is sufficient originality in the village of the future, let it have a

journal of its own. Not a newspaper; London can supply news. But a matutinal sheet, akin to the *Spectator* and *Tatler*, would certainly be a welcome visitant at all breakfast-tables; and such a sheet let us have—a fasciculus of verse and prose, of epigram and scholarship for the male readers, of love-songs and gossip and light essay for the ladies. Let it combine clarity of thought with politure of style. If the commonalty demand something more fescennine, a village Lloyd or Cassell will probably arise to supply it: but our *Villager* shall be classic.

As it is one of the chief elements of longevity to pass much time in the open air, I should wish to see natural science taught freely out of doors. Whoso has tramped over wild fells with Sedgwick, listening to his eloquent exposition of the marvels of the soil, will herein agree with me. Botany and geology are sciences that we all ought to learn. I would have my villagers great

planters of trees, great growers of flowers and fruit. *Silvae consule dignae*: arboriculture is an occupation worthy of a gentleman.

- A planter of trees is a giver of good gifts to posterity. In White's 'Selborne' there is record of a planter who lived to see an oak of his own setting twelve and a half feet in circumference. It was the growth of seventy years: but it is my thesis that any youth of sound constitution may sow acorns to-day and see the oaks that spring from them fine young trees in 1941. I have no particular prejudice in favour of this nineteenth century; and, if there is no let or hindrance, shall be very happy to breathe the air of the twentieth myself. Should that be my destiny, there will be a few tolerable trees of my planting to be seen. I wonder whether the young scarlet oak now bursting into bud upon my lawn will outlive the poems that I fain would imagine immortal. It is no matter. You plant your tree, and it will, at

any rate, give pleasure for a term of years. You write your verse, and, if there is thought in it, that thought will live, even though the rhythmic form perishes.

It is not growing like a tree
In bulk doth make men better be ;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere ;
 A lily of a day
 Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night ;
It was the plant and flower of light.
In small proportions we just beauties see ;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

It may. At the same time the short-lived 'flower of light,' with all its dainty beauty and subtle odour, is not precisely so grand a creation as the great oak at Cowthorpe, in Yorkshire—a tree 85 feet high and 78 feet in periphery. The lover of trees should wander through the glades of Lord Leigh's park at Stoneleigh Abbey, where tall and shapely oaks grow with such symmetry that

you do not guess their size until you measure them.

Certes, I should like my village to be settled among great trees, and not far from a river. The life of water is a great charm to a landscape. My village youth will want to boat and bathe, of course; these are boyhood's necessities. As to the girls, I think the canoe suits them perfectly. Rowing is rather too strenuous an effort for them: but a light canoe may be lazily paddled, and a pretty girl seated in one, gliding along the stream, looks like some marvellous aquatic bird that has come down to astonish the swans. I am not certain, by the way, that a lake would not be preferable to a river, if there were only a lake to be got for the purpose. When I close my eyes I can see Windermere, with all its islands sleeping in the summer sun, though 'tis at least a decade since I stood beside that loveliest of lakes. But the thought of a

lake has made me desultory and digressive—a thing inexcusable in a scientific treatise like the present.

As I write, I perceive in the *Globe* newspaper that somebody or other wants to establish a model village in Surrey—a kind of colony of genteel paupers. This, be it well understood, is not my scheme. I wholly object to it. Genteel pauperism should not be petted. What we want is to develop the highest energies of the people; and for this purpose I hold that a healthy village life is the best conceivable condition. In my supposititious village I want no one who cannot live generously in proportion to his rank in life. I want the cream of all classes, poet or carpenter, mathematician or mower. I want men who are masters of their art: and such men will be able to pay proper rent for suitable dwellings, and to eat strong meat and drink ale or wine, and to live lives suitable to their vocations. The Skimpoles

and Micawbers may go to the pauper villages which an imbecile generosity, a maleficent benevolence, aspires to found.

My idea is the germ of a mighty social revolution : for, if such villages as I propose should prosper and multiply, cities and towns would perish.



CHAPTER IV.

THE MARRIAGE OF COMPLETION.

Hæc est illa tibi promissa Theophila, Cani,
 Cuius Cecropia pectora voce madent.
 Hanc sibi iure petat magni Senis Atticus hortus:
 Nec minus esse suam Stoica turba velit.
 Vivet omnia quodcunque per istas miseris aures:
 [redacted] foemineum, nec popolare sapit.
 [redacted] Parthenis nimium se præferat illi,
 [redacted] Amyis Pierio sit bene nota choro.
 Cassandra fingentem Sappho landavit amatrix:
 [redacted] et non doctior illa fuit.

Martial.

NOTWITHSTANDING what Matthew Arnold
 aptly calls the 'sexual insurrection,' I am of
 opinion that the majority of Englishwomen
 of culture take a reasonably just view of
 their position and destiny. The ladies who
 raise a clamour for certain political and
 social privileges never hitherto allowed to

women are so pertinacious and vociferous that we are sometimes misled into imagining them far more important and influential than they truly are. The great mass of gentlewomen look upon the movement with indifference or contempt, aware that woman's highest destiny is to marry—to be merged in her husband, and complete his character. It is my firm faith that for every man there is one woman, a fit consort; and for every woman, one man; and that all marriages between persons not designed for each other, though they may seem to work well enough, are necessarily imperfect. The world is a loser by unsatisfactory marriages: many a man turns politician, or invents a pill, or writes a sensation novel, simply because he cannot live happily with his wife. The ideal marriage occurs only when two persons meet who are the complements of each other; and if this be the case, I hold that they will know it by a sudden instinct on their very

first encounter, whence poor Phebe's ejaculation :—

Dead shepherd, now I find thy saw of might :
' Who ever loved that loved not at first sight ? '

If my hypothesis be just, it is clear that what, for brevity's sake, I may call *the marriage of completion* is the only true marriage ; and it may easily be understood that such a marriage is conducive to longevity. It is unhappily rare, for many reasons. Marriages of convenience or of ambition are unlikely to be marriages of completion. But neither are the marriages contracted too often in these days by mere boys and girls, who are necessarily immature, both intellectually and physically. If you look through a hundred modern novels, you will generally find that their heroes are boys just fresh from college, and that their heroines are children of eighteen or nineteen. Hence it is clear that among the large section of the people for whom novels are written, the ideal marriage

is one that occurs in extreme youth. Now the girl of nineteen is a pretty creature to look at, and her prattle may amuse you for ten minutes; but her character cannot be developed, and her physical powers must be far from maturity. I was talking one day to a physician who has made a fortune by his profession, and who has only a daughter to be its recipient; and he told me he should disinherit the young lady if she married before she was twenty-five. That is an excellent age for a woman, while a man ought not to dream of marriage before thirty. When children marry they are abnormally prolific, and their offspring are of an inferior order; and the girl who marries at eighteen is an old woman at thirty-five, when she ought to be in the prime and perfection of life. I may parenthetically observe that this is illustrated by the vulgar agitation in favour of permitting widowers to marry their deceased wives' sisters. A man chooses a wife

of eighteen or twenty, who in ten years becomes worn out altogether, in mind and in body; while her unmarried sister, who has been allowed to mature to the age of thirty, is a much more agreeable person in the eyes of the rather jaded husband. Hence have arisen so many illegitimate connexions of this kind, which Parliament is now implored to make legal. Even if this should be done, of course no gentleman would enter on such a connexion.

The boy who marries is just as unfortunate as the girl. Every year probably reveals to both that they have entirely mistaken one another's characters. At thirty our youth is a father of a family, though his own education is unfinished. Both for parent and children this is an incalculable misfortune; and it is a misfortune to the nation, since by such marriages we get an inferior race of people, whom no School Board will ever be able to raise much above imbecility. When

I see a young gentleman make himself ridiculous in political affairs, I am wont to look at his lineage, and I usually find that either his father and mother, or one pair of his grandfathers and grandmothers, married too young. This blunder is irremediable. I, as a preacher of longevity, am bound to protest against it. If we accept the vulgar error that a man is old at seventy, of course boys of twenty-five must be regarded as men : but my thesis is, that by cultivation of physical and mental health it is easy to reach a hundred in good condition, and that a hundred and twenty ought not to be deemed an unattainable age : and I therefore regard a male person of twenty as little more than a child. Should we in time grow wiser and live longer, our children will be kept under paternal rule for a longer period. Laws and customs change with circumstance ; they vary with density of population, with rate of wages, with many other accidents ; and it is

quite certain that they must alter when a thing so important alters as the duration of human life. I hope to see the time when the period of minority will be extended from twenty-one to thirty years.

The man who marries wisely, having found his *altera ego*, is rarely fortunate: and this rarity of fortune is in a measure due to early or sordid marriages being the rule. Even those however who do not find their true completion might live more happily with their wives if they and their wives understood what God brought them together for. The English aristocracy (those of pure blood, I mean) seem to understand this better than any of the orders below them: chivalry is not quite dead among them, and they have some reminiscence of the days when knights and troubadours of gentle blood shed that blood freely for God and the ladies. The plutocracy, it seems to me, have faint notions as to what women were meant for. A civic

millionaire will rush by rail from his country house to his offices, spend the day there in grubbing up materials for more millions (*effodiuntur opes*), rush back just in time for his splendid unscientific dinner, fall asleep after it, and be as dull as a hog or a log till it is time to breakfast and go to business again. To a man of this sort a wife is merely an apparatus for exhibiting his wealth . . . by wearing fine dresses, riding in fine equipages, presiding at superb banquets. He has no idea of her use in life—but then he has no idea of his own. These opulent gentry, who amass gold without any notion of how to spend it, are like the pigs employed to hunt for truffles: the ring in the porcine nose preserves the tuber for a daintier palate . . . and the money these people get together and lavish in ostentation, though it brings them no happiness, confers happiness on the humbler folk they employ. Acquisitive power scarce ever coexists with

power to enjoy : the money-maker resembles a pump, which brings the water from the depths of the earth to quench the people's thirst . . . but has no palate of its own. I believe that mercantile life can be of a far higher type than this : indeed there is ample proof that it has been so. There have been merchant-princes in England as well as in Venice ; men who were the equals of barons and the friends of kings. I will not say that there are none such now ; but they are few. Haste to grow rich and a foolish fondness for show are the tendencies which degrade the mercantile character in this century : whether they will diminish it is hard to say—scarcely, I fear, in times of peace and prosperity.

I return to what I have called the marriage of completion, contracted between two persons of marriageable age. . With health of mind and body, this ought to bring perfect happiness ; and clearly it is in the highest degree conducive to health of mind and

body. What a man wants in his wife is a second self—a creature whose desires and opinions are gradually fused into an identity with his own. In this process there is no loss of individuality: a girl does not become a woman until she is a wife, does not develop her true character. As I have written elsewhere, this is prefigured in the stories of Pygmalion and of Undine. Every marriage of completion is also a marriage of creation: the husband creates for himself a new entity. This thing must remain a mystery to the uninitiated—to those who have not married, or have married only in name: even as in *Ægypt* and in Greece so now there are esoteric truths which cannot be apprehended by all. That what I maintain is true will be acknowledged by all men and women who are truly married. But I can no more show the significance of it to the outer world than I can delight deaf ears with music, or open the windows of infinitude to those who have

not the poetic vision. This however I may say to the lover who has found his right companion: when she becomes his wife he will find in her new beauty and intellect and goodness, daily developing under his hand, as the statue grows to perfection in the marble. What there is excellent in him will become hers, though in a softened and feminine form . . . as a great oak by the water side looks the same yet lovelier as reflected in the tranquil depth of the mere. The process doubtless is interpenetrative; he also is changed, but not in the same way, for woman's nature is receptive. An unwedded girl is like the world under a crescent moon—lovely, mysterious, fantastic, capricious, colourless, cold. Lo, the sun rises . . . the bridegroom rejoicing in his strength . . . and the forests tremble with delight, and ocean laughs with infinite foam, and the air is full of the larks' wild songs, and life and love are renewed throughout the land. Every sun-

rise is a new creation : even so is every marriage of the true kind.

It is of primary hymeneal import that the production of children should not be regarded as the chief end of marriage. Life in the present is the only true life. If you prefer your children to yourself, you are living in an uncertain future. Young mothers often make the unfortunate mistake of allowing their children to lessen their attention to their husbands ; hence arises a gradual severance between husband and wife, which leads them in time to regard each other with a kind of affectionate indifference. If any maiden who thinks herself in love reads these pages, let me ask her whether she deems it possible that when she is a wife she will love her firstborn better than the man who now seems to her the noblest creature in the world ? If she admits such a possibility, either she is incapable of true love, or she has not yet met her master. And if any

young mother is among my readers, let her consider whether her fancy for her first baby renders her slack in her duty to her husband. If so, she is on the point of losing a woman's greatest imaginable happiness—complete identity with the man she loves. Consider, I entreat you, girl-mother, whose child seems such a pretty toy, that its future is unknown to you; that it is merely a nice little animal, which may die early, or grow up to be altogether worthless; that whatever its destiny, when it reaches perfection (or even before) it will leave its mother and seek alien love—doing, indeed, precisely what you have done. Treat it lovingly, but not dotingly. Remember that your husband is, to you, the first man on the surface of this planet. Do not mentally dethrone him in favour of a baby . . . a creature whose body is in the gelatinous, and its soul in the nebulous stage.

Modern parents make a double mistake :

they spoil children in their earlier and are afraid of them in their later years. A pert precocity is hereby encouraged : laughable at eight, it becomes a nuisance at eighteen. Young people of the latter age amaze one with their self-sufficiency ; they have made up their minds on all questions of religion and politics ; they may tolerate their parents perchance, but are pretty sure to regard their grandfathers and grandmothers with undisguised contempt, as relics of a much mistaken world. The boy is probably a Republican and a Deist ; the girl a Tory and High Churchwoman. It . . . for at that age the distinctive pronouns He and She are not yet applicable . . . it, I say, is quite decided in its opinions, laughing to scorn all attempts to argue with it. Indeed it is only too pleased to argue with its seniors, and to claim for its own intuitions superiority over their hard-won experience. The reason of all this is clear enough : because we have

contracted the span of life, we bring our children forward too rapidly, and just when they are at the stage for beginning to learn, they have made up their minds about everything. Even if wisdom comes to them later in life, it is not without arduous effort and much shame for their own early folly.

Boys of the middle class are often obliged to take a manly position much too early, from pecuniary necessity. This is probably unavoidable in the present state of society: the evil fruit of it is visible in the deficiency of culture and paucity of ideas which often surprise one in mercantile men of great wealth. Assuming the absolute necessity of this, it is not so with girls, and if girls of that class were kept back and taught more carefully, and fed with ideas instead of with follies and accomplishments, they might be infinitely serviceable . . . to their brothers, first, to their husbands, after. A boy goes at fifteen into a counting-house, and at five-

and-thirty is a prosperous merchant; if at that age he were to marry a refined and cultivated girl of his own rank, ten years younger than himself, with all her tastes and faculties harmoniously developed, with a preference for art over dress and for literature over flirtation, would she not humanize and civilize him? Seeing that commerce is the great business of the mass of Englishmen, this is a matter worth deliberate thought. It is surely possible that a man in the prime of early manhood, being above the necessity of sordid toil, might gladly find leisure to recommence his education. Why should not his wife be his tutor? But to this end she must have travelled beyond the limits of Pinnock and Mangnall . . . must know something besides the piano and the use of the globes and calisthenics. Her education must be less effeminate and more feminine.

I am prepared to see the notion utterly ridiculed that a wife may supply to her

husband what he has failed to obtain by early training; even though most people acknowledge that there was something noble in Steele's description of a lady whom to love was a liberal education. But I shall adhere to my opinion that the women who are so vociferous and persistent in their hysteric cries to heaven and earth for a career would be far wiser if they qualified themselves to be useful wives. Here, I say, O shrilly eloquent ladies, there is a noble career for you; you may civilise the most opulent class of Englishmen; you may turn city men into merchant princes. Is this not a worthy object of ambition? The best of us will find that he has something to learn from his wife . . . that there are subtler faculties in her nature enabling her to guide him in circumstances whereby he is himself perplexed.

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy :

and there are also more depths in a woman's

nature than any modern philosopher will fathom. The man who has nothing to learn from his wife is simply a stolid blockhead, who will never learn anything from anybody.

Concerning the marriage of completion, these things may be affirmed. The man, becoming a husband, becomes simultaneously a creator and a father; he creates a new soul in his wife; he exerts over her paternal authority and protection. Similarly the woman, on entering wifhood, is at once a mother and a teacher; she begins immediately to nurse and foster and educate. The terms husband and wife contain within themselves all other expressions of relationship; including these, they include much more than these. It is impossible to do more than indicate this fertile theorem, which will yield infinite significance to those who study it carefully. I merely repeat that in the supreme relation between two human beings

all other relations are involved. Hence the marriage of completion completes not only the characters and destinies of the two persons concerned, but likewise all their conceivable functions. Comedies and novels are laughed at for ending with marriage; but the artist's unconscious instinct is true. To marry aright is to read the riddle of the world.



CHAPTER V.

POLITICS.

Beware of beans! *Pythagoras.*

THE right thing to do, if only possible, is to avoid politics altogether. Matters political are more satisfactorily treated in England than anywhere else that I know of: yet can a gentleman look at the work of a contested election in an English borough, or enter the lobby of the House of Commons, without a feeling of immeasurable disgust? And in the House itself what contemptible motives are patent! In the *Times* report of to-day I find it stated that Professor Fawcett told the Prime Minister of England that he retained a majority merely by holding over his supporters the threat that if defeated he

would dissolve or resign. I fear the erudite professor was quite right. The Premier likes office—I refer to no particular Premier—and his supporters like ‘the pleasantest club in London’—and an election is confoundedly expensive. Hence a government of fatuity may continue to exist in this country long after public opinion has utterly condemned it. The brains may be out, but the man won’t die. It seems to me that for some time the brains have been out of our English political organisation: that we go on without much harm is due to the imperturbable common sense of ordinary Englishmen.

Mr. Disraeli, in one of his incomparably brilliant books, has stated his opinion that English politics are too parochial. I agree with him that they are parochial—but I think it eminently fortunate. England is a huge parish. In a parish we naturally select the dullest and vainest fellows for churchwardens and overseers: this is precisely what

occurs in our parliamentary representation. Is there any constituency in England (even Greenwich, not excepted) that does not contain a man far abler, far fitter to represent it, than its actual representative? Why should first-class men be compelled to political drudgery? Select six hundred and fifty persons from any civilised part of England on any principle . . . because they all have red hair, or all have the same name, or are all teetotallers, or are all six feet high, or all suffer from rheumatism, or all like Bass's ale, or all know the Greek alphabet . . . and I suspect they would compare favourably with any parliament since the days of Simon de Montfort. The truth is that the best Englishmen will not be troubled about politics. And I think them wise. With such rapidity does public opinion act in these days, that a minister who had committed a long series of small follies without any punishment save universal ridicule, would be pulled up very short if he committed a very great folly.

My inference is, that while government in England is carried on in its present way those who desire long life should resolutely keep aloof from the machinery. Were men wise and strong, no government at all need exist; no man would annoy his neighbour, or do anything to require county courts and county magistrates to legislate for the repression of knaves and fools—surely a work demanding no supreme development of morality or of intellect. If there were no knaves or fools, no legislation would be requisite. Of course parliament is superior to its destiny—even as the ratcatcher is higher than the rat. But parliaments and governments of all kinds cannot be freed from the vice of their inception. They are solely designed to keep inferior persons in order. The higher minds of the race cannot be expected to do such dirty work.

Wherefore I say to the man who would in both senses live long—avoid politics. It is

enough to manage one's own affairs, without interfering with other people's. The only thing to be gained by a modern political career is a knowledge of the weak side of the human race; and the worst of it is, that political work invariably develops men's weaknesses, bringing to the surface the innate rascality of one man, the unsuspected avidity of another. The pitch of politics debiles us all. Aristides, if a candidate for the representation of Eatanswill, would have gone in for bribery and corruption. You can't reform it. Leave it alone. Catch the spirit of Hamlet when he exclaimed—

The world is out of joint. O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right.

Hamlet did not set it particularly right, and he, poor fellow, was brought up to the business, having had the infinite misfortune of being born a prince. I can conceive nothing more dreadful.

The man who has the infinite good fortune

to be born without a position and with a brain deserves congratulation. This, however, is a very rare condition in modern England. It is hard to avoid being somebody—socially: it is hard to avoid being nobody—intellectually. I know several people who deem it their duty to keep a carriage and pair, and who, in consequence, never eat a good rump-steak or drink a bottle of sound claret. You cannot, indeed, live in a country district without having such neighbours; and I suppose it is the same in London—which city I avoid. I have been accused, by various kindly critics of my novels, of laying too much stress upon eating and drinking—without which it is not particularly easy to live. The *Times* (April 14, 1871), remarks that I talk a deal too much of eating, drinking, and smoking in *Marquis and Merchant*; but it goes on to say that ‘one great charm about my books—and it is a great charm in these

days, when poets and novelists are apt to write in a querulous *dyspeptic* strain, as if they studied human nature while crouching over the parlour fire—is that there is plenty of oxygen in them; they breathe a jovial out-of-doors atmosphere; we seem to be under the blue sky, and to hear a wholesome breeze rustling the tree-tops.' Mark the word *dyspeptic*, which I italicise. My friend in the *Times* answers himself. I am eueptic: which I could not be unless I cared about what I eat and drink. He has divined my mode of work. I am now writing on a bird-haunted lawn, with a joyous wind tossing my lime-trees above me, and three dogs sleepily watching my proceedings, and wishing I would knock off work and take them to the Thames, and a bottle of hock close at hand. If I drank green tea or laudanum instead of hock, I should not offend my critics by writing of wine and ale. But, then, what would my books be like?

Again; the *Athenæum* (March 25, 1871), after reading me a friendly lecture on the same topic, hopes that I will give the public 'a shorter book in summer, in which not every chapter, but every page, shall flow with refreshing bumpers of Roederer and los Vougeot.' This is very much what I am trying to do at present. I want this to be a summer book that shall teach multitudes how to multiply their summers. I believe I shall succeed, if only I can get hold of a publisher with a grain of sense in his head. Meanwhile—

There's a beautiful blonde for whom

I have been mad in my time full oft:

O, her kiss hath a gay perfume!

O, her voice is divinely soft!

Sweet it is her waist to clasp,

Strongly she mankind can grasp;

While life lasts I shall ever be fond

Of that same peerless piquant blonde.

There is also a rare brunette,

Years ago beloved by me;

Purple suns that in autumn set

Have not more magical hue than she.

O, to woo her is joy and power !
She, of brunettes the choicest flower,
Hath a deliciously dainty breath :
Faith, 'I shall love her until my death.

*For the laughing blonde is Champagne, you see :
And the rare brunette is Burgundy.*

Historic investigation has shown that life in England is at this date longer on the average than it was in the Middle Ages. And that the average size of Englishmen is also greater was pretty clearly proved at the Eglinton tournament in 1839. The aristocratic babies who played their parts in that absurdity found that the armour of their ancestors was too small for them. One of those infants, by the way, was Prince Louis Napoleon, whose weak brain has done a good deal of mischief since. Now, if men live longer than they did some centuries ago, and if likewise they grow to a finer size, I take it that what they eat and drink has something to do with it. So I must ask my courteous critics to forgive me for

occasionally referring to a topic of such moment.

I am afraid this is a digressive and desultory chapter, with very little in it about politics. But, as my theory is that politics should, so far as possible, be avoided, I may defend this procedure logically. This is my final thesis: if by attention to the rules of spiritual and corporal health you can obtain for the majority of men a perfect constitution, there will be very little for governments to do. In a perfect community, the only persons who need exercise authority would be fathers of families.



CHAPTER VI.

ARISTOLOGY.

Caninum prandium.—*Plautus.*

LIKE Horace, I confess myself ‘Epicuri de grege porcus.’ There are people with a fine abstemiousness about them, who think eating and drinking gross and vulgar. Shall I tell you why? They have either no palates or no digestions. There are

Poets tune-deaf and painters colour-blind.

There are men without the sense of smell, whom a sewer offends not, and who get no delight from the multitudinous wreaths of honeysuckle or the tremulous bells of the lily of the valley. So there are people to whom wood-pigeon is as palatable as wood-

cock, and cider as Sauterne. For them was designed the Roman playwright's *caninum prandium*—a breakfast without wine.

I agree with my friend Mr. Blackmore, that noon is the proper hour for the labourer's dinner. This morning, after writing a couple of articles, I took a stroll on my lawn before going to bed. It was half-past three. The nightingales were singing vespers—the starlings were seeking breakfast. Some labourers were just going to mow my neighbour's grass. Between my habits and theirs the difference is as great as between those of nightingale and starling. They will want their dinner at high noon, doubtless : I shall probably be at breakfast.

Two meals a day is what the eueptic philosopher should eat—*prandium* and *coena*. I am dealing with the man who is not tied to time—who has not made himself a slave—who lives by some work which he can do when he lists. The moment you

have to be at a given place through given hours you become a machine. Machine work—mere routine—necessarily decreases the ideal power; and this decrease, according to my theory, tends to the shortening of life. Let me suppose that you can do as you please, and that you please to lead a life of lettered leisure in some pleasant corner of England. You rise when you like; you go to your room when you like. You may sleep, if you will, at high noon, when all the common world is alive; you may be wakeful and brilliant in the short hours of the night, when there are no witnesses of your vagaries save the silent stars above you. Living such a life, I venture to think that you should take two meals daily—*prandium*, which is neither breakfast nor luncheon, but something better than either; and *coena*, which is dinner. As to the hours, you are your own master. From eleven to twelve I recommend for *prandium*—and it should be a

meal of cold meats, prawns and lobsters, fruit, salad, strawberry pies and sardines, cold game when it is attainable, light wines according to the season.

Your ghost

Of a breakfast in England, your curst tea and toast, as Tom Moore puts it, is an utter absurdity. The man who has heavy and definite work to do is most unwise to begin his day in such fashion. A lobster and some hock, or a cold grouse and some Burgundy, would set him up for the day more thoroughly. I have nothing to say to the critic who maintains it would cost more, since I write for those who can afford to live well. I do not write for millionaires or voluptuaries. I write for the man who gives good work of the brain in return for what the world gives him. It is quite true that such men can seldom live so freely as those who devote their faculties to making money out of the world; but 'the whirligig of time brings in his

revenges,' and Plutus does not permanently get the upper hand of Apollo. The art of money-making, like all other arts, is apt to master its possessor : the man who has made his million in the City bows down and worships the God MILLION. It is not so with those of the first force : the merchant prince, who values money for what it can do, and intelligently uses it, is not unknown in England. In all departments of life the art overpowers the inferior artist : the small poet venerates rhyme, and the puny mathematician reveres formula.

With regard to dinner there is much to be said, and when all is said, much must be left to the man who wants to dine. First : the hour. For an average, writing as I am for men who use their nights wisely, sleeping six or seven hours, I take seven to be a capital time. But let there be variation with the weather. In winter dine by candle-light : of course no man who desires to live long will

have gas in his house, or will, if he can avoid it, dwell within a district in which gas is laid on. In summer—when there is real summer in England—I like to dine on my lawn, under the trees: but if the capricious weather makes this dangerous, one can at least have the dining-room windows wide open to the Elysian air—by which I don't mean the east wind. How to dine is the next point. English cookery gets remarkably abused by the sagacious gentlemen who have dined in the *gourmand's* haunts in the Paris of the past. Those haunts I have tried, and have never found so good a dinner there as in London. We are too apt to run down our own doings. I have studied the literature of gastronomy, and know the careers of the illustrious cooks: and I maintain that an English farmer's daughter, with a little information from the book-learning of her mistress, will make a better cook for a gentleman and poet than all your Vatel's, and

Udes, and Soyers. We do not want cunning culinary contrivances in the land of the shorthorn sirloin and the southdown saddle, in a country whose esquires have venison in their parks and pheasants in their coverts. Garriek wrote—

God sends us good meat, and the devil sends cooks.

Certes, our ordinary English cookery verifies the epigram. But the fault is with the mistresses. Ladies should not be above obtaining that dainty knowledge of cookery (a branch of chymistry) which in these days is supplied by the most elegant scientific manuals. Servants are made by their masters and mistresses. If, with higher intellect and culture, you cannot make your people do their duty, the fault is your own. A primary necessity is, to know in theory what the persons you employ are expected to know in practice. Will it sound very hideous in the ears of a myriad pretty girls, whom I expect to read this book in the hope of

learning to become great-grandmothers, if I tell them that to study a scientific manual of the culinary art will greatly help them to preserve the love of the young gentlemen who are sighing just now like furnaces for their favours? The ardent youngster exclaims, with courtly Waller:—

Give me but what this ribbon bound :

Take all the rest the sun goes round.

But if he wins what he wants, and if, when he and the Lady of the Ribbon are spending their honeymoon together, he finds that she knows how to order dinner, I guarantee that he will be agreeably amazed. And when they come back to his ancestral home—let us hope that it is an Elizabethan oak-shaded mansion—if the Lady of the Ribbon at once assumes the command of the kitchen, and cross-examines the cook, and shows some knowledge of the sirloin's under-cut, and insists on hot plates and perfection of service, I apprehend that the most poetic soul that

ever loved a woman will not be blind to such rare accomplishments. Verily, they are better than the Use of the Globes, or even than the power of performing on the piano fortissimo the Battle of Prague.

I am not joking in this matter. As are the patricians, so will be the plebs. Masters and mistresses make their servants. Evelyn, in his *Silva*, that most charming essay on woodcraft that was ever written (and I like to quote Evelyn in this connexion, for he lived wisely to about eighty-six years), reminds us of a good saying of Cato's: 'Male agitur cum Domino quem Villicus docet.' This aphorism suggests much, and its truth is undeniable. If you want your servant to do his work, you must know better than he how it should be done. There is an old proverb, 'If you want a thing well done, do it yourself.' I, on the other hand, say, never do yourself what you can get some one else to do; ~~but~~ see that it is done. Thanks to

the multiplication of books, any man of culture may know more of gardening than the best practical gardener—more of cookery than any *cordon bleu*. This being so, the master should instruct the servants in the very arts they practise—which is the idea of Cato and of Evelyn.

This aristological chapter gives me an opportunity to break my prose with a cycle of sonnets adapted to the dinners of the year. They were written, these careless trifles, at various times ; so I put the date of the year against each :—

JANUARY.

Janus, thou lookest back to Christmas tide,
And forward to the wondrous growth of spring :
Thine are the choicest birds that hither wing,
And thine the rarest products of the wide
Ocean that isolates us. 'Tis the pride
Of this sharp winter yearly hovering
Over old England that its keen months bring
Woodcock and snipe to tempt us. Me arride
Also the larks and wheatears which at Brighton

You get for breakfast from the Sussex Downs,
Ending, one need not say, with lobster after.
Such prandium's pleasant when the quick waves
whiten,
And Château d'Yquem the slight banquet crowns,
And there is ample room for love and laughter.
1871.

FEBRUARY.

From Périgord to Paris there's a path
Brightened by truffles—diamonds culinary.
Though now with game our feasts we may not vary,
Yet a delicious flavour widgeon hath,
And we may find a pleasant aftermath
To cheer the febrile days of February.
Lo, now flies flicker, and the trout grows wary:
Now, excellent are goslings, plump though rathe.
And I maintain a moderate man can dine,
Though epicures fastidious may demur,
[I of plain dinners am a hearty lover]
On fresh-caught trout (Sauterne should be the wine)
A few lamb cutlets served with cucumber,
And, last of all, a brace of golden plover.
1870.

MARCH.

This is the month that comes in like a lion :
It give us dust . . . a peck of that same handsome
Dust is called worthy of a great king's ransom.
The oyster's perfect now—that glorious scion
Of King Poseidon. Nothing new to try on
The damask white appears. Still I may scan some
Reasons against your being quite *impransum*
In windy March. What if you choose to fry an
Eel from the Thames . . . a very useful river—
What if you get lamb curiously early,
And make your grumbling gardener force some
mint,
I think—although the March winds make you shiver,
And the cook's sulky and the gardener's surly—
If you can't manage to dine, the devil's in 't.
1871.

APRIL.

Thou beautiful Aprilis, month well named
By reason that all things thou openest,
Whether the fair flower or the maiden's breast,
Or aught that is delicious and unshamed

And perfect in its beauty. Am I blamed
For writing of sweet spring with joyous zest,
When the wicked cuckoo steals an alien nest,
When woods are musical with wings untamed?
This will I say of April: he who knows
The true administration of the kitchen-
Garden, and puts a clever little witch in
His culinary corner, safely grows
Green peas the vernal joint of lamb to suit,
And his asparagus is absolute.

1871.

MAY.

May brings us salmon, mullet, trout, and prawn:
Red Arun mullet, stewed in sound port wine,
'The woodcock of the sea,' is food divine.
Lobsters are pleasant on the picnic lawn,
When lilacs are in bloom, and corks are drawn
Of Chablis or Montrachet. When you dine,
Pigeons and quails, in leafage of the vine
Enwraught, forget not—nor the *dorée jaune*.
May is the merry month when subtle tackle
Woos spotted darlings from the sinuous stream:
In May old hens to guard their ducklings cackle,
And turkey poults attain the stage supreme.
Perfect asparagus is, and vernal spinach,
And tiny whitebait throng the Thames at Greenwich.

1870.

JUNE.

O perfect period of the sweet birds' tunc,
Of Philomel and Procne, known to fable ;
Of wayward morns, and never utterable
Joys of the evenglome, beneath the moon !
Cool be thy food, O gourmand, runs the Rune :
Pigeon and quail are suited to the table ;
Anchovy and sardine are noticeable ;
Red mullet, first of fish, is prime in June,
Richmond and Greenwich tempt the Londoner
To dine where Thames is cool, and whitebait crisp,
And soft the manners are and lax the morals.
But I (when twilight's breezes swiftly stir,
Rob the rich roses, through the woodbine lisp)
Dine on my lawn, hedged in by limes and laurels.

1870.

JULY.

July,—the month of odorous orange flowers—
Welcome at nuptial banquets. Helios rages,
And on the southern wall grow brown the gages,
And melons mellow through the scorching hours ;
Cherries and strawberries come in luscious showers ;
Cool cream of Devon the acid touch assuages—
Delectable to deipnosophic sages ;
Through the full-foliaged copse the loveret scours.

Flutters the wheatear now, and sails the plover—

Whoso is wise the latter bird will roast,

And serve him, smoking on anchovy toast.

What else? 'Blue borage flowers; and so the lover

Of cooling drinks, with claret-cup may try

To mitigate the fervour of July.

1870.

AUGUST.

August arrives. We enter the august

Portal of autumn, graced by delicate clusters

Of grapes grown purple under noontide lustres,

Whence the white feet of girls shall tread the must

Of a great vintage. But the perilous dust

Of battle rises, and the War Fiend blusters,

And, as along the Rhine each army musters,

Its vineyards shudder at the sword's sharp thrust.

Still rolls the year: adjourns the Commons' House:

Peers to their parks and prelates to their cloisters

Return: for lo, the Twelfth brings back the Grouse—

Even as the famous Fourth is opening Oysters.

Birds and mollusks to the Epicure most dear—

Alas, and dearer every mortal year!

1870.

SEPTEMBER.

Alas ! September shakes a great dominion :
 Crushed is the gastronic Capital.
 Who eats *Cramouski à la Cardinal*,
Rôti de grives, or partridge-soup with Bignon ?
 Who to the Café Anglais takes *sa mignonne*,
 As in the reckless days Imperial,
 Ere Prussia camped before the City-wall,
 Or a great Empire fell for an opinion ?
 Ay, and the *Ai Béranger* loved so well,
 Clicquot and Heidsieck, Piper, Moët, Roederer,
 Shall not be quaffed in Pleasure's fair pavilions ;
 These slake the thirst of tasteless Teuton millions,
 Cooling the throat of many a licensed murderer—
 Which I consider a confounded sell.

1870.

OCTOBER.

October ! Month of the climax ! King of game,
 The pheasant, of the beech-copse peerless denizen,
 Deserves the epicure's right earnest benison,
 Deserves the well-skilled sportsman's careful aim. . . .
 [Alas, hens hatch them, and they're much too tame !]
 Moreover, excellent is red-deer venison ;

And partridge, plump as girl be-rhymed by
Tennyson,
Still on the palate hath a special claim.
You can begin with oysters—go to Rule's :
A sturgeon cutlet makes a pleasant dish
For any one who likes unusual fish—
But the herring suits the men who are not fools.
Final delight—a woodcock or a snipe :
And the first frost will make the medlars ripe.
1869.

NOVEMBER.

Now nobler grows the sirloin of the ox,
As autumn fields grow mistier and moister ;
And, dainty fit to tempt a nun from cloister,
November for the epicure unlocks
The secret of the truffle. Strasburg shocks
Humanity with *foies*. Who love to royster
Know well that plumper, sweeter, grows the oyster :
While for fierce-hungry followers of the fox,
Who love a mighty joint of the ancient sort,
Washed down with mighty gulps of ancient port,
After a rapid run a royal revel—
For them the solid splendour of the beef ;
Capon and pheasant yield a light relief ;
And turkeys' thighs are now just fit to devil.
1869.

DECEMBER.

I don't know what to say about December :
It is the very month of hospitality,
Through which let no vile air of unreality
Breathe to annoy one. Don't we all remember
Some Christmas time of boyhood—some slow ember
Of the Yule log that had its actuality
Two decades back ? You'd give a principality
To be a boy again, and to dismember
Your goose with the boy's invincible appetite,
And eat thereafter fifty-five mince pies,
And think that you had wisely bridged the
isthmus
Betwixt two years. What will you say to-night,
Having grown somewhat cool, and calm, and wise,
And not particularly fond of Christmas ?

1871.



CHAPTER VII.

SLEEP.

Death is the ocean of immortal rest:

And what is sleep? A bath our angel brings

Of the same lymph, fed by the self-same springs.

AMONG the exquisite necessities of existence, there is nothing to equal sleep. It is, as the verse above indicates, a foretaste of the infinite future. We want an oneirologist. There is nothing more wondrous in the ancient Hebrew idiosyncrasy than the capacity for interpretation of dreams. Always, among the descendants of Abraham, dreams were significant. Why should it not be thus? Homer referred to immemorial legend when he wrote his immortal verse concerning the Gate of Ivory and the Gate of Horn. Happy

the man who receives his visions through the Gate of Ivory: false they may be now and then, but they are poetic, and poetry is the soul of life. Moreover, sleep and its results are a special study in connexion with the question I have on hand. If you sleep badly, dear reader, either your mind or your digestion is troubled. Now, as to trouble of mind advice is useless; if you are in love, why, gather your rosebud as soon as possible; if you are in debt, fight your way through; try to attain that enviable position, to be owner of a small country-house and a large balance at Coutts's. These annoyances conquered, you may sleep soundly and deliciously. There are two kinds of sleep. There is that of the man who has tired himself out, mentally or bodily, and who 'sleeps in Elysium.' There is that of the man who has not quite exhausted himself, and who drinks delicious draughts of imagination's wine in the magical realm of dreams.

Tell me a man's dreams, and I will tell you what he is. The gates of the loveliest gardens in Dreamland have a private key, and can be unlocked only by the favoured few.

My happiest invasion of that divine region was after a severe illness. I had been attacked by rheumatic gout. Dear reader, I hope you are entirely ignorant of that intolerable malady. It is the Proteus and Procrustes of disease, and appears under many forms in divers parts of your corporeal entity. It stretches you on the rack if you are short, and shrivels your extremities if you are long. Well, I had a few weeks in bed with this vile bedfellow; but I had a dear old friend as doctor, who knew every trick of my physical equipage, and a very loving and wise little wife, so I pulled through. Opium he tried . . . and it was necessary to assuage the intolerable pang. As an inevitable consequence, I dreamt. To me it does not now seem a dream. I went to

Olympus. Hermes, messenger of the gods, came to fetch me. I can see the hill at this moment—a gradual green slope, not unlike this very Knowl Hill near which I write, but without earthly foundations, and held miraculously in mid-air above the central business of the world. Long valleys were there, and a sylvan scene, like my beloved Mount Edgecumbe, in Devonshire ; but Hermes led me straight to a grove of bay—*laurus nobilis*—through whose dark green leaves were visible not only marble statues calm in their beauty but also flying forms of boy and girl chosen by Apollo for mere loveliness. And he led me to Apollo's temple of Marpessian marble far within the grove : and in its inmost sanctuary we found the poet-god, indolent amazingly, reclined upon a green marble couch, and reading the last poem published by Marsyas. I must say that Leto's son, haughty as he was depicted in Homer and the Homeric Hymns, showed to

me in my dreams measureless courtesy ; he offered me his own private nectar, with the remark that he had bitter ale close at hand, if I agreed with him in preferring it. That Apollo should drink bitter ale may seem strange : but dreams are dreams.

I dreamt this dream of Olympus, with many concomitants not mentionable here, for many nights in succession. I lived among those Greek gods, and was a kind of Disraeli-Ixion. I made several acquaintances, but found nothing so pleasant as the humorous homeliness of Hermes, and the half haughty but wholly generous courtesy of Apollo. Indeed, I saw few goddesses. They were away, perhaps, at a croquet picnic among the blameless Ethiopians.

It is quite impossible to establish a satisfactory theory of life without considering that large portion of life which is passed in sleep. There are people who maintain that four hours' sleep suffices them : but even

these rare entities pass one-sixth of their lives in a state of unconsciousness. Most men spend at the very least a third of their lives in this condition. And it is quite clear, from the experience of the dullest among us, that the brain works in sleep. There are people, it is said, who never dream. It is questionable. I have heard a story of Coleridge's meeting a man who professed himself an atheist, and saying, 'Do you dream?' The man said, 'No,' and the poet was no longer surprised at his atheism. So far as I can judge from experience and evidence, the probability is that the spirit, the soul, the self, never sleeps. Why should it? Clogged by corporeity, it retires into its inmost asylum, and what we call dreams are the echoes of its movement there. There are times when the outward senses can take no cognisance of their master's actions: then we have sound sleep, devoid of dreams. Between that stage and wakefulness there are numberless grada-

tions ; there are visions that would madden Nebuchadnezzar and perplex Daniel ; there are dreams outdoing those of Ezekiel and De Quincey ; but there are also grotesque and ridiculous and commonplace dreams. All these variations seem accountable on the hypothesis that the Spirit wakes always, but that its serfs, the Senses, often sleep. Those five slaves of the soul are, like all other servile creatures, untrustworthy. Berkeley believed them to be consistent liars. I do not : but I know well that all five may deceive the master of this mortal mansion if he does not look after them. In no case is the adage more perfectly verified, that good masters make good servants. Sight may be keen : but what cognizance can he take of a lovely woman or a noble landscape without the educated guidance of Soul ? If Hearing hath no such guidance, he will take for truth the poet's irony—

The devil, with his hoofs so cloven,
May, if he chooses, take Beethoven.

Touch is seldom well managed by his master, as is shown by his exceptional excellence in exceptional cases: and as to Taste, I scarce dare venture to mention him in days when Bruce is in the ascendant. Still, Sir Toby's immortal question will find its reply. Perhaps Smell is worse treated than any of his brothers—a thing not remarkable in days of infinite and innumerable stenches. In half a minute, in the Strand, you may walk past a pickle-shop, a cook-shop, and a scent-shop: the blended odours of the three are sufficient to demoralize ordinary noses, even as the Bonapartist army was demoralized. But Soul seldom educates Smell . . . which is curious, when his dogs might teach him better. A dog—ay, or even a bee—knows a gentleman from a cad by his odour. Men seldom know honeysuckle from beans, and are quite unaware that in the hyacinth and the onion you strike the same note of perfume, with just an octave between.

However, not to be too digressive and desultory, it just comes to this. The five Senses are not over well treated; they like amusement: they want the sympathy and direction of their master, who indeed can do very little without them. For although in his mansion he has noble windows of fancy on the first floor, and sometimes a right regal outview of imagination from a tower that overlooks the world, even these are valueless unless his serfs clean the windows, and so give him cognizance of all which surrounds him. When left to their own devices, when unshown the work they have to do, they take the common advantage of their master's periodical absence—and there is *High Life Below Stairs*. The man who in his dreams sees monsters, hears owls hoot, tastes salts and senna, smells asafetida, touches corpse-like palms, is punished because the soul has never subjugated the senses.

Hence my aphorism: if you want sweet,

sound, sufficing sleep, let the soul be paramount. Let no sense either shirk its duty or do more than its duty. Keep *always* alive to all influences, yet be greater than them all. Have you not seen one man the slave of music, another of pictures, another of his dinner . . . &c.? Verily it is almost worse to be the slave of your own senses than of an alien master. If you have to stand behind a counter for coin you are to be pitied: but if, with no necessity forcing, you put yourself under the thumb of some one of your senses, and allow Sight or Taste, or any other of the five, to govern Soul, you deserve to be kicked. And kicked you will be, certes.

Be the master. Make every sense do its work, and do it thoroughly. Miss not enjoyment of a rare sunset, a chorus of nightingales, a hedge of Portugal laurel, a splash in the sea, a bottle of good claret perfected with *asperula odorata*. But always let these

things, and such as these, be secondary. The primary power lies in idea. Thought makes us godlike, sense earthlike. The man who has once thought a great thought might be content if his existence were at once cut short : it is felicitous that existence is, on the other hand, lengthened for the men who think. But I am not just now sanguine of a crowded crop of centenarians.



CHAPTER VIII.

HEALTHY LITERATURE.

Yes, we await it, but it still delays,
And then we suffer; and amongst us One,
Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne;
And all his store of sad experience he
Lays bare of wretched days;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
And how the breast was soothed and how the head,
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

Arnold.

THE reference here, I assume, is to the *In Memoriam* of Tennyson—a work which certainly appears to me by no means as healthy as the grief of a great poet ought to be. The whole passage in *The Scholar Gipsy* is worth study as showing the evil influence of diseased

literature. Mr. Arnold catches the exact spirit of Tennyson when he proceeds thus :—

This for our wisest : and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would end,
And waive all claim to bliss.

‘ Our wisest ! ’ . What wisdom is there in this maudlin moaning over the events of life ? That the highest wisdom pertains to the supreme poet is my firm creed : but the supreme poet is not the man to ululate interminably about the death of a friend. He knows too well the significance of death. He knows too well the goodness of God and the greatness of man. To him life is not by any means a ‘ long unhappy dream ’ . . . an idea worthy of a Frenchman or a fool. It is, on the contrary, a noble reality, only too brief for the great deeds that should be achieved in it, for the immortal ideas that pervade it.

The Greeks knew better. Their type of the

The Secret of Long Life.

poet was Apollo, the divinity of sunshine and strength and youth and love. Fancy Apollo in need of 'hourly varied anodynes . . .' one day the melancholy verse of Tennyson, and another the distraught prose of Carlyle . . . one day Holloway's pills, and another old Dr. Jacob Townsend's sarsaparilla! Not precisely the poetic lord of the arrows of light:

Nunquam humeris positurus arcum,
Qui rore puro Castaliae lavit
Crines solutos, qui Lyciae tenet
Dumeta natalemque silvan,
Delius et Patareus Apollo.

It is no wonder that the lower classes of minds among us are afflicted with a morbid disgust of life, when men of such intellectual power as the authors of *In Memoriam* and *The Scholar Gipsy* show the bad example. Both are poets of no common order; but both have wholly mistaken the life of man on this planet if they really imagine it to be

nothing more than a 'long unhappy dream.' It is a great reality, and very full of happiness.

Wordsworth (who lived without anodynes, having faith in God) thus admirably defined the qualifications of a poet—

The vision and the faculty divine.

I suppose some amount of the divine faculty must be admitted to belong to the morbid modern poet: but no glimpse of the divine vision has he, or he would not moan and moan, like an idiot who cannot apprehend the meaning of life—like an owl blinking painfully at the sunshine. To the true poet is given in the highest mortal measure that divine vision which all men in their degree may attain: and no amount of high culture, of musical and literary faculty, will make a man a poet unless he is also a seër. To see God and man and life and death *as they are*—not through spectacles of blue or yellow glass—is a poet's first necessity. If he cannot

do this, he may be as delicate and dainty as he likes—I would rather hear the most untuneable barrel organ that ever infuriated Babbage, or the loudest railway porter that ever shouted unintelligibly the name of his station. The frightful imposture of setting up for a poet with a fine stock of dactyls, spondees, trochees, and the like—but without an original, or even a healthy idea—is to me intolerable—

I had rather be a kitten, and cry *mew*.

But it is vain to protest: these vacuous gentlemen will do it.

Writers of lower rank—the novelist and the journalist to wit—are just as bad as the poet. The ordinary novel of to-day is an abomination. I will not name names. Take the writer you think the best; examine his master-work fairly; then say if there is a character in it like anybody you ever met—or expect ever to meet—in actual life. And

why must every story have a villain in it—or mayhap a dozen villains, male and female, each more atrocious than the other? You don't encounter such people in society: if you did, society would be intolerable. Why is fiction to be more vile and vulgar than life? Is this the true function of letters? Here is the poet teaching you that life is a long unhappy dream—and the novelist that your wife is probably a bigamist and your daughter a murderess. Where are we to look for something healthier? Try the journals.

Now the press which lives by cheapness and has to appeal to an uneducated audience has a vast number of faults; but it is on the whole better than that of any other country, and I shall not criticise it. But there are journals which profess a higher tone, and ask for refined readers, and yet play precisely the part of the novelist who puts impossible villains in his stories. These newspapers do their utmost to furnish their

public with new sensations. They invent social horrors, and lecture upon them with affected indignation. One week all English girls are wicked : another, all English matrons get tipsy in private. This kind of writing is usually done, I am told, by briefless young barristers, fresh from scrambling hot coppers from their Club windows to the University roughs, and too ignorant of the world to know the harm they are doing by such libels. They are not so much to blame as the sordid persons who employ them.

It would be tedious to trace the morbid tendency of contemporary literature through all its ramifications. Let me briefly recapitulate. The poet howls like a dog in the December moonlight about the miseries of this world and the uncertainties of the next. I say that, to the true poet and to the brave man, this world is full to the brim of happiness, and that the future is as certain as the truthfulness of God. The novelist

puts on his scrofulous pages contemptible wretches who commit purposeless crimes. I say that such people are, luckily, very few—and that the writer who professes to depict life is not justified in disgusting us with such abominable inventions. The journalist ascribes to English ladies and gentleman a new vice and folly every week. Of him it is sufficient to say that he lies . . . for money.

Cannot we have a healthier literature? Are we to be always at the mercy of people who seem as if they dined on underdone pork-chops washed down with laudanum? O for one hour of Jonathan Swift, to clear the literary atmosphere! Imagine a new Laputa, with Darwin and Tyndall and Huxley among its professors! What havoc would the mighty Dean make with our literary and scientific Yahoos.

Is it absolutely impossible to revive in England the literature which is natural to the national character . . . a literature that is simple,

healthy, true, Homeric, Shakespearian? The general argument is that the public get what they demand, and can expect nothing better . . . indeed that anything better would not pay. But this argument involves two absurdities: that the professed leaders of thought should bring themselves down to the vulgar level—and that literature is to be measured only by its rate of payment. Better that the art of printing had not been invented than that it should find employment for men of ability mean enough to employ their ability in pandering to the opinions and passions of the mob for a pecuniary consideration. A man of genius who writes to live—and who consequently puts thoughts which he knows to be false into language that he knows to be contemptible—is one of the saddest objects that I know.

Why should we endlessly study the wrong side of the tapestry? Why always prefer the hideousness to the loveliness of life?

Having tasted the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, does it necessarily follow that we should like the evil best? I do not. If any man replies that I have once or twice acted as if it were otherwise, I answer him with—

. . . . Video meliora, proboque;
Deteriora sequor.

This however is no longer my case. I have come to the conclusion that if we were properly trained, no man of first-class intellect—*classic* intellect, I would call it—would condescend to the slightest vice or folly. Such training is obtainable: and mark how the results would lengthen the lives of those whose longevity is important.

The vile literature of the day is just as injurious to the mind as the adulterated beer supplied to the labouring man is to the body. I defy you to imbibe either without shortening your life. Both are salted to

prolong your thirst for them: both are injurious by crossing the healthy current of a man's life. Already I have indicated certain typical forms of this literature which are, in my judgment, unwholesome: to go farther than this would, perhaps, induce my readers to suppose that I felt some jealousy or envy of my superiors in the literary world. I am incapable of any such feeling. My cup, at least, is full. When I meet a man healthier than myself I may possibly envy him . . . but I don't think I shall.



CHAPTER IX.

THE CLASSIC CHARACTER.

‘Horror classicus.’—*Ovid.*

AULUS GELLIUS, in his *Noctes Atticæ* was I think the first who used the word *classici* as descriptive of writers occupying the first or highest class—the class, in fact—all others being below classification. The word, in Augustan Latin, seems to have had no such meaning. I remember well a schoolfellow of mine, a dunce most incorrigible, getting excellently flogged for translating the above words of Ovid, ‘a horror of the classics’ (which the hapless youngster, now a member of Her Majesty’s Government, undoubtedly possessed), whereas really it signifies the

startling sound of a trumpet : and, as he set up a considerable screeching under the operation, *classicus horror* came to be the slang phrase for what schoolboys inelegantly term 'blubbing.' However, the word classic, in its later and wider sense, is useful, and suits my purpose.* I should call not authors only, but all other men, classic, if the work they do, or the way in which they live, is unquestionably first-rate. The classic character involves a harmonious development of power, and a complete freedom from the meannesses of vice and of folly. To be born classic is not usually given to men : and the absurdity of modern education, which drives us all into one groove, and fosters competition, is not at all favourable to becoming classic. Our new School Boards will not agree with me, I know ; they will do their utmost to carry further the old methods, to set one young brain against another, to develop certain faculties and leave others inert.

Ambition is the ruling power of existent society: the classic character is without ambition. Worthy Mr. Walker, in his *Original* gives us this aphorism: 'If any man possessed every qualification to succeed in life, it is probable that he would remain perfectly stationary. The consciousness of his powers would tempt him to omit opportunity after opportunity to the end of his days. Those who do succeed, ordinarily owe their success to some disadvantage under which they labour, and it is the struggle against a difficulty that brings facilities into play.' Why should not a man remain 'perfectly stationary' if the station whereto he is born is perfectly satisfactory? Had I been born to a comfortable country estate, I certainly would not have written three-volume novels. A gentleman should never trouble himself to write anything heavier than a lyric or an epigram. Walker is quite right in his assertion that incomplete men are the most likely

to succeed in life. The very desire of change is a symptom of mental disease; and the sense of essential inferiority stimulates a man to strive for social superiority. Shelley, the poet of normal dissatisfaction, exclaims—

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not.

Absolutely essential to the classic character is a complete enjoyment of the present, which altogether shuts out vain regrets for the past and empty imaginings of the future. *Felix est qui nihil expectat*—though said as a joke—is very seriously true. Perpetual expectation of something which never may arrive weakens the fibre of the mind, destroying that power of dwelling upon ideas which is the main source of vital health. The man who is continually thinking of to-morrow's enjoyment (excitement, more properly, for such men cannot enjoy) is like one who thinks of to-morrow's dinner in

the middle of to-day's. Such a proceeding injures digestion. Sit easily at the banquet of life; drink the wine of thought with tranquil enjoyment; talk pleasantly with your neighbours at the table. If a *mauvais quart d'heure de Rabelais* is inevitable, by no means anticipate it. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof . . . and sometimes more than sufficient.

In the village life which I desire to see, the classic character might possibly be developed. Such a community would give due honour to any man who did his work well: the great ploughman would be appreciated as well as the great orator or poet. In the *Odyssey*, when the immortal Ithacan disguised in his own palace as a beggar is annoyed by the insolence of Eurymachus, he tells him that he would like either to fight him or to plough against him a whole summer day. The wisest and most patient of Greek heroes did not disdain to hold the plough. But the

tendency of neoteric education is to seize the future ploughman so soon as he is old enough to wear corduroys, and to teach him decimals and historic dates and mnemonics and geology and other things dear to Mr. Lowe and Professor Huxley : wherefore, in his adolescence,,instead of a classic ploughman, you get a day-labourer with a smattering of half-forgotten knowledge that serves only to disgust him with his vocation. It is the same thing all through. If a man is to be a lawyer, they teach him chymistry. People are supposed to know the highest departments of the art they practise, but are found singularly deficient in the elements. There are not three orators in Parliament who can articulate. There are not three writers on the London press who can punctuate. There are not three poets who can rhyme. There are not three generals who thoroughly know geography.

At the foundation of the classic character

•

lies this impulse—to do the thing which a man best loves, not that which will pay him best. By doing the work that is natural to you, you give your powers fair play: but as it is, we find men at the Bar who were meant for the Church, men writing criticisms who were designed to sweep crossings. One could laugh at these mistakes if they had not troublous results. Folly invariably begets disaster. I have in my short life—and, on my own theory, I am yet a mere boy—seen several monarchs and ministers at whom it was impossible to help laughing, yet who did mischief by no means laughable. There are not many points in which I agree with Mr. Buckle, but he assuredly was right in his opinion that a fool is more mischievous than a scoundrel. And a fool on a Throne or in a Cabinet! We have seen such.

I venture to think that I know three men of classic character. Two are men of high patrician blood, born near the beginning of

the century. Each lives a calm and complete life, enjoying existence perfectly, fulfilling destiny without effort. One is a lover of brilliant society, wherein he takes an easy lead: the other, like his friend herein, is also the most intimate observer of animated nature that exists. Every bird in the air is his familiar acquaintance. He writes of them with an inimitably graphic pen. He knows their flight and feather on the instant. He knows all the fish in the streams, all wild creatures that haunt the woodlands. He lives his life: and, though he has definite reason for caring about the future, it does not trouble a temper so tranquil, a mind so nobly poised.

A third whose character I deem classic is a writer of novels which every reader of these pages will have read delightedly. They shall not be named here: let his publishers advertise them. He is also a charming poet; a charming translator of Greek and Latin poetry; and a gardener worthy, when he

passes into the gardens beyond Styx, to be shaken by the hand by old John Evelyn. I agree with Edgar Poe that gardening is the supreme art. It brings you into partnership with God. My friend last-named blends the poet and the gardener as no man ever blended them since Adam made his first love-lyric within the nightingale-haunted foliage-walls of Eden. I know nothing pleasanter than to lunch with him on Muscat grapes and Moselle *mousseux* and listen to the caprices of his converse.

If, dear reader, I could bring before you either of these three : one, let us say, in a brilliant saloon at London-super-Mare . . . the second feeding the tame pheasants, a hundred or more, on the lawn of his manor-house ; the third pruning his trees, budding his roses, . . . polishing his stanzas, by the Thames : you would understand better than I have been able to tell you what I mean by the classic character.

CHAPTER X.

THE SUN AND THE SEA.

Solem quis dicere falsum
Audeat?—*Virgil.*

THE sun is the great origin of health . . . the sea is the great healer. The man who would live long should never shun the sunlight. Build your house wide-windowed and many-windowed, so as to catch plenty of it: and have a nursery under glass for your children, where they may roll about in nudity, and absorb the life-giving sunshafts. I suppose that the finest physical example of manhood is an English non-political country gentleman in his prime. Well, he lives out of doors. In autumn and winter he hunts and shoots; in spring and summer

he looks after his parks and woodlands. All day long he is in the open air, getting vigour from the sun. So he grows like one of his ancestral oaks. It must not be supposed that such vigour is unattainable from the great solar source upon a cloudy or rainy day. The light is there, though retarded: no cloud that ever overspread the sky could intercept the solar influence.

In taking as an instance of high physical health the typical country gentleman who abstains from politics, I may be accused of ignoring my theory that *ideas are life*. It is not so. There are ideas beyond the limits of the House of Commons, the Stock Exchange, and the newspapers. The life of an English country-gentleman is singularly like the life of Homer's heroes . . . who indeed were simply a set of Greek country-gentlemen, obliged to unite and punish the people of Troy, a city of sea-robbers and Sybarites. They relucted for a long time, just in the

English fashion, but they ultimately found the thing had to be done, and so they did it pretty effectively. Through Homer's 'mythological machinery' and poetic refraction all this is clear enough; and in reading Homer I am often amazed at the likeness of his characters to the country peers and squires of this day. It was through this quality in him that the late Earl of Derby, though no poet, caught so much of the spirit of the *Iliad*.

Well, will anyone tell me that Achilles and Odysseus, Agamemnon and Menelaus, were men without ideas? Their life was simple enough when no fighting had to be done. They lived in great houses amid pleasant gardens, and all their retainers and dependents lived with them. They rose early, looked well after their estates, were not ashamed to drive the plough themselves, delighted to go down among their labourers and refresh them from the wine-skin. They hunted boar and deer—and when the quarry

was brought home would cut it up and cook it themselves. They loved athletic sports, and had many a holiday for the youth to race and wrestle and throw weights. They loved the banquet, plentiful and with abundant wine; and loved, when it was over, to hear the recitation of some wandering poet. They loved to entertain a stranger—to welcome him with the bath and clean raiment and a noble meal—and afterward to hear his adventures. When the Greek squire's linen was to be washed, his daughters and their maidens would drive in a four-horse waggon to some secluded river, and do the work quickly, and bathe thereafter, and end the summer day with a merry game at ball. For the father there was no *Times*, for the mother no Mudie, for the boys no short pipes, for the girls no croquet or curates. But, so far as I can judge from their historian, Homer—and his truthfulness none dare question—they lived

in an atmosphere of ideas. Their utterances are pregnant with thought. A simple life is not necessarily stupid, nor a complex life intellectual. An old Chaldean shepherd beneath the midnight stars might have ideas beyond the reach of a modern stockbroker or civil engineer. Besides, in modern society you can scarcely ever be certain that an idea is your own, whereas in those times of isolation and simplicity there could not well be any doubt on the question.

I take it that the life of an English country gentleman is nearer to the Homeric life than could well be expected at a distance of thirty centuries. Still we might get closer to it by the establishment of such villages as I have indicated. They would be very like the old Greek cities: just as an English squire is about equivalent to an old Greek king. I fear however that in these prosaic days it would be impossible to revive the Homeric minstrel.

As we get sunshine on cloudy days, so we get sea-breath many miles from the sea. That same sea is a great physician ; it heals the world, and it heals individuals. To live long, one should live on an island ; I mean on an island of reasonable size, being of course aware that not to live on an island is impossible. To be in the arid and adust heart of Central Asia must necessarily shorten life. Here in England the sea-breath can make its way to most corners of the realm ; I think I have sniffed it at Warwick, the omphalos of the midland. When the wind comes from the south, I can inhale the sea-breeze by walking up a hill close to my gate, from which Windsor Castle is visible. That breeze does infinite good. It cools and freshens the air. It destroys malaria. It brings ozone and iodine. And it is not only the breath of the sea, but also its products, which I may note as medicinal. To restore the brain or purify

the blood, eat fish; take your phosphorus and iodine in the form which Nature, the mother of all chymists, supplies them in; eat mullet and dory, eat lobster and prawn, above all, eat the inimitable oyster. Have it opened in its concave shell, not to lose a drop of the priceless liquid, which is full of infinitesimal oysters, all alive. Alas! will oysters never more be sixpence a dozen?

To the impecunious, every month is R-less.

Every great race has its special function: that of the Greeks evidently was to interpret nature—not scientifically, but poetically. Of course the poetic interpretation, if true, will involve the scientific. From the Homeric epithets applied to Apollo and Poseidon might be evolved all that modern science can tell us about the sun and the sea. Take one instance alone—*ἐκάεργος*, the far-worker. How apt the term for that central Power whose distance is still unsettled by modern

astronomy—whose rays, transmitted through thirty million leagues (more or less) of space, will melt the snows of winter, colour the flowers of spring, ripen the grapes of autumn, light your cigar through a lens, drive your railway train, take your likeness—whose light, shining upon Jupiter, makes that remote planet a glory of the night, to be invoked in prothalamia—

Hesperè, quis coelo lucet jucundior ignis ?

I believe a student of Homer might deduce almost all we know in several directions, and indicate many things yet unknown from his epithets only. Let me suggest a single problem : Why is wisdom γλαυκῶπις ?

Sunshine is open to all : even dwellers amid fuliginous factories get some of it, though they may seldom be conscious of the gift. Apollo can pierce the carburetted atmosphere of the country of chimneys. And sea-breath traverses this island from shore to

shore, though dwellers far inland do not get quite as much as they want. However, there are days wherein the sea is accessible to those who pine for it, and I cordially advise anyone who feels that longing to gratify it as soon as possible. A thirst of that kind indicates a real want—

Strip to the wooing wind. From rock romantic
Plunge into green depths of the hyaline:
Sate thee with kisses of the cool Atlantic:
And then . . . go home and dine.



CHAPTER XI.

ASGILL'S THEORY.

Coelum, non animum, mutant qui trans mare
currunt *Mortis*.

My friend Mr. Keningale Cook, author of *Purpose and Passion*, in an essay recently published in *Fraser's Magazine*, has brought under public notice the curious theory of Asgill, who maintained that to die was both unnecessary and cowardly, and who contrived to live to about a century, if one account of him may be credited. That Asgill was all wrong is clear enough, but he came very near being right. His vision was clouded by a false conception of our destiny, and he took no account of the fact that the law of matter is perpetual change. We may

predicate of substance that it is always varying; of spirit, that it knows no variation. What we regard as change in human character is merely its revelation through the changes of circumstance. The power that we call Shakespeare was as great when the poet was a baby,—ay, and before—as when Hamlet was conceived; it is as great now, somewhere; it can be neither diminished nor increased. This is true of all possessors of the immortal Spirit. I will not say that all mankind are such.

Asgill, who was expelled for heresy from both the Irish and the English Houses of Commons, and who passed in the King's Bench the last thirty years of his life, had made up his mind not to die at all. 'Die when we will,' he writes, 'and be buried when we will, and lie in the grave as long as we will, we must all return from thence and stand again upon the earth before we can ascend into the heavens.—*Hinc itur ad*

Astra. Now the assertion of Christ concerning himself was, *that man by him may live for ever.* And this is that magnetick which hath drawn the world after him.' . . .

'Now, if these words of his are words only, then was he an impostor, and his doctrine is false. But if this assertion of himself be true, *that man by him may live for ever*, then all our attempts beneath this are mean and cowardly, as counting ourselves unworthy of eternal life.'

Elsewhere he asks: 'What then is death? Why, 'tis a misfortune fallen upon man from the beginning, and from which he hath not yet dared to attempt his recovery. And it serves as a *spectrum* to fright us into a little better life than (perhaps) we should lead without it.'

And he puts his faith in his own theory in language too strong for the year 1700. 'If, after this, I die like other men, I declare myself to die of no religion. And in this let

no one be concerned for me as a Desperado : for I am not going to renounce the other parts of our religion, but to add another article of faith to it, without which I can't understand the rest ; and if I lose this additional article by failing in this attempt, I have as much religion still left as they that pity me.'

Mr. Cook, who has made a careful study of this remarkable man, thinks that in his later years Asgill renounced his creed in its literal meaning, and interpreted it mystically. It must surely have occurred to so severe a logician that no material form is permanent : had he lived a century and a half later he would have apprehended the great theory of modern science, that no particle of matter is for a moment at rest. The world perishes in all its atoms every instant, and is in all its atoms renewed. Scientific discovery, which to some minds brings the conclusion that the universe is an amazing automaton, convinces

me irrefragably that there exists an ever-present God. Men of intellect, ingenious and inquisitive, are most useful when they bring us news of undiscovered natural processes ; but if they turn theory-builders, and construct the universe from their own limited notions, they act like some stonemason employed to chip blocks for a cathedral, who explains and criticizes the scheme of the architect. *Quod in natura naturata Lex, in natura naturanta Idea dicitur.* They, however, deify Law, being unable to conceive the existence of a Deity with Ideas. I suppose that famous fly on Æsop's wheel thought the wheel a living power, and ignored the waggoner altogether.

In an essay designedly desultory, I venture to think Asgill worth passing mention, though I differ from him *toto coelo*. Indeed the idea which I attempt to enforce could never have entered his brain, or he would not have desired to turn this planet into a colony of

Struldbugs. If the soul be immortal and reproductive, it need no more grieve for the loss of the body than an oak of a thousand summers grieves to drop its foliage in autumn. Asgill talks of 'the cowardliness of dying'—which is absurd: but there is ignorant cowardliness in fearing death. Mr. Browning laughs at this fear in a pugnacious fashion, which likewise is absurd; he, as a great poet, ought to feel that there is no need of struggle for the soul that is akin to the Divinity. The world moves in cycles, with an inexorable regularity behind its apparent irregularity. The baby weeps when its rose dies or its bird flies away: the man who weeps when his best friend dies, and who shudders himself at the threshold of death, is just as babyish. And does not the fear of death shorten life? Is not the *mens sana in corpore sano* perpetually injured by the terrors of superstition and the potions of empirics? Would not life be lengthened by the utter abolition of Calvinism and calomel?

CHAPTER XII.

LONG LIFE IN LAKELAND.

Vergilium tantum vidi.

IN 1848, during one of the spasms which have periodically shaken France since she destroyed her aristocracy, I was in Westmorland. I had the great happiness to meet Wordsworth. He said many things pregnant of meaning which I shall never forget. We talked of longevity. He remarked, speaking as if he were an old Roman senator dressed like an English farmer:—

‘Height of hill and movement of water are health-giving. They are associated with primeval soil and an air always fresh and stimulant. If you want to judge the truth

of this, look at the obituary notices in the *Westmorland Gazette*.'

When the notion of writing this essay entered my brain, recollecting the great poet's advice, I wrote to the pleasant and erudite gentleman who edited the *Gazette* then, and who edits it now. I asked him to give me a list of all the local deaths at eighty and upwards for a couple of months, simply saying if they were of males or females. He selected those of December and January 1870-1871, quoting only from the paper's special district. Thus are they tabulated :—

December 3, 1870 :—

88, f. ; 80, m. ; 97 (!), m. ; 82, f. ; 82, f.

December 10 :—

90, f. ; 80, f. ; 84, m. ; 90, f. ; 84, m.

December 17 :—

82, f. ; 84, m. ; 89, f. ; 82, f. ; 82, m. ; 85, m. ;
84, f.

December 24 :—

80, m. ; 81, m. ; 84, m. ; 95, f. ; 80, f. ; 80, f.

December 31 :—

88, f. ; 93, m.

January 7, 1871 :—

81, f. ; 86, m. ; 85, m. ; 85, f. ; 92, f. ; 93, m.

January 14 :—

93, m. ; 82, m. ; 85, f. ; 89, m. ; 81, f. ; 87, m. ; 88, m.

January 21 :—

84, m. ; 84, m. ; 85, m. ; 81, f. ; 82, f. ;
98 (!), f.

January 28 :—

84, m. ; 81, m. ; 83, f. ; 94, f. ; 89, f.

Now, I take this to be a very remarkable list. In nine weeks of our last severe winter there died in Lakeland fifty persons, octogenarian and over, twenty-five of each sex—and the average of that fifty is above eighty-five years ; and I can assert confidently that scarce a week passes wherein the *Westmorland Gazette* does not contain obituary notice of more than one octogenarian. At the risk of inducing speculative builders to invade the shores of lovely Windermere, wild Wast-

water, poetic Rydal, I place these facts before the public. Was not Wordsworth right in his theory? Is not a land of hills and streams a land of life?

I take it however that the reasons of long life in Lakeland are not exhausted when you have mentioned the health-giving soil, the fresh air of the hills, the soft climate of the lake-valleys. There is something, be assured, in the wonderful beauty of the district, fertile in ideas to all who are capable of apprehending landscape-beauty, which is of infinite value. When you walk upon the terrace at Rydal Mount, where Wordsworth dwelt, and pass the noble laurels which he planted from slips he had cut off those set by Petrarch over Virgil's tomb, you see a line of lakes below you on the one hand, you see an ærial rock above you on the other. Now, it is often urged that such scenery can have effect only on poetic minds: but to this I reply that all

minds are poetic—in the sense of being recipient of poetry. If there were no poetic apprehension in the souls of men, where would the forgetive poet find an audience? Am I to be told that beautiful scenery put into words will affect men whom the scenery itself would not affect? Doubtless the poet has a power over nature and the lovers of nature, and can by a single lyric make the scene more magical; but he would have no universal influence were there not a universal love of beauty—a love which it is his function to encourage and guide. A man entirely without poetic faculty may have poetic vision—may obtain from lovely scenes ideas which he can by no means communicate. Such men are numerous, and are the poet's best auditory. Coleridge's famous cloud-sonnet is a case in point. You look at a sunset, and think it beautiful: let an imaginative friend indicate great cities around an ocean-bay, or village-dwellings with green lanes between,

or vast forms of lions and rhinoceroses, and you follow him at once. His cloudy lions roar. There is odour of honeysuckle and murmur of rustic sweethearts in the village-lane. There are crowds around an orator in the civic agora, while the great ships slowly furl their sails in the bay. Once you have found out the significance of a sunset, every sunset becomes a poem.

Now, while most emphatically asserting that in the soil and air of Lakeland there is something which tends to longevity, I maintain that the marvellous beauty of the country—so varied that Christopher North declared it a cabinet gallery of all conceivable natural pictures—has a great deal to do with it. To the critic who gets his notions of nature from Royal Academy canvas, it may very well seem that the old Westmorland statesman derives no special pleasure from the silver light on

Winding Windermere, the river-lake,

or from the play of cloud on innumerable peaks and fells. But this is an error. They do not try to put their impressions into words. Why should they, not having to write for the papers? But they enjoy all the same; they appreciate the changeful beauty which is so wondrous that during their eighty or ninety years of life the Omnipotent Artist has never given them a duplicate sunrise or sunset to look at. And in this, I say, they obtain lengthened lives.

Let me remark, in passing, that though supreme sunrises and sunsets are about equal in beauty, a supreme sunrise is more frequent than a supreme sunset. I often enjoy a sunrise just before going to bed.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE INFLUENCE OF LAZINESS ON LONGEVITY.

O Idleness, enchanting Idleness !

The more we have of thee, the more we love thee ;

In this, thou art supreme, thou art alone.—*Landon.*

I AM inclined to think that the laziest men live longest. By a lazy man I by no means mean a man who does no work, for the laziest men often do the most. And about such work as they manage to do in literature there is this to be remarked ; it is usually terse and pregnant ; they are too lazy to dilute their ideas with a myriad words, in the style of the fashionable leader-writer.

Very few men know how to laze. The ordinary human being wants a friend to chaff or a girl to flirt with. Put him *alone* . . . by

which I mean far from people of his own class, in a fishing village on the coast or an agricultural bucolic village in shore : . . and he will not have the remotest idea what to do with himself. He has neither infinite resources nor external apprehension. But set a man who knows how to laze in either position. Take the fishing village. He will stroll down to the beach, and watch the sea, and by and by talk to some of the fishermen. He will listen to their talk, with its mixed flavour of brine and tar, and find out all about their wives and children, their histories and expectations. He will suffer himself to be carried to sea in their trawlers, and will watch the process of catching lobsters, and will eat the finest lobster caught for breakfast. And all the while an endless throng, an interminable procession of ideas will pass through his head . . . ideas forgotten so soon as they arrive, but which have in their passage through the brain refreshed the spirit.

Of course we cannot all laze, since there must be somebody to cook dinners and build houses. This, however, is an unimportant consideration—seeing that few people know (or could, indeed, be taught) how to laze, and that the restlessness of modern life makes everybody anxious to indust. Somebody must work, since no machinery has yet been invented to entirely supersede manual labour : and this, I think, is fortunate, because else there would be no chance for men with the power to laze.

The picture of Charles Fox, down at his place in the country, lying under a haystack reading Greek, and looking up from the page (Aristophanes, let us hope) to watch the birds eating his cherries, is delightful beyond measure. On the other hand, I hear of one living statesman that he delights to ride about on a bicycle—and of another, that he spends his vacation in cutting down trees. Both these occupations show an incapacity

to laze. A politician, after the evil air and erratic hours of a session at St. Stephen's, should get as much ozone as he can . . . but he should laze. To expend himself on heavy exercise is a mistake, unless he is physically a giant. So close is the alliance between mind and body, that the work of a session in the House will take all the physical energy out of a man—and he is singularly unwise if he attempt to restore himself by additional expenditure of physical energy. I remember dining with a member of Parliament when Sir Robert Peel was first minister. At nine o'clock, just as we were thinking of leaving, he came in and sat down to a rumpsteak and a pint of port . . . the wisest dinner in the world under the circumstances. There was a gridiron in the House in those days.

If we regard philosophically what I venture to call the faculty of laziness, it becomes at once evident that it is the result of a complete nature. The man who can laze (having

of course a right to laze) is conscious of his power. He knows he ~~can~~ do what he has to do in less time than the ordinary mortal imagines it will take him. He tacitly accepts the margin. That time is his, and nobody has claim on it : and during that time, if he be wisely idle, he will mature his powers, and attain a greater speed and mastery of work, and thus broaden his phylactery of idleness.

The world has been driven so fast of late, and everybody, from First Minister to shoe-black, has taken to do his work with such an impetuosity of integrity, that my theory of the value of laziness may at first be unpopular. This, however, is the fate of all great ideas, when they happen to be true. And mine is shown to be true by innumerable examples. Go into a boys' school ; note the little rascal who does least work, catches most cockchafers and whippings : depend on it he is the best specimen there. Go (if Miss

Pinnock will admit you) into a girls' school : the naughty young minx who can't understand the Use of the Globes, but who draws felicitously abominable caricatures of the Lady Principal and her subordinates, will make a better wife than the stolid young persons who learn their lessons to the latest inch. It would be easy to multiply examples.

Hence, I say to those who desire to live long . . . Take life easily. Its troubles are trivial in comparison with its enjoyments. With a clear brain, a good digestion, and no ambition or avarice, a man ought to be perfectly happy. If he is not, it is because he has not learnt the elementary conditions of happiness.



CHAPTER XIV.

EXORDIUM.

THERE are a thousand things on which I could in this connexion descant most eloquently. Everywhere nature is filled with beautiful devices to make men enjoy life . . . and therefore to make them prolong life. Everywhere you are tempted to waste a moment on your way, by some lovely appeal to sight or smell or hearing. The honeysuckle hinders the evening traveller, a mystic fragrance from the hedgerow : the nightingale causes him to linger, a passionate outburst of song beside his ear : the great sunset suddenly causes him to stop, for it is the instant autograph of God. Avarice and ambition tempt men to lose no moment . . . to press for-

ward everywhere and always, doing their uttermost to gain coin and fame. But those who are misled to act thus are doubly betrayed—for the man who works for money becomes the slave of his desire, and, when he has obtained fiftyfold beyond his first anticipations, he is quite unable to enjoy it; and the man who works for ambition, and desires to place himself high above his fellows, finds, when he is a Lord Chancellor or an Archbishop, that the world's eye is fixed, not on him, but on some brilliant young Marquis with a million a-year.

For avarice, I presume, is a desire to attain money: and ambition, a desire to attain notoriety.

But, as I have indicated, men of these sordid aims sustain very often a double defeat. For there enters the arena a man of genius, without either avarice or ambition; without avarice, since he values money merely as a means of obtaining other things;

without ambition, since he knows there is no power on earth to promote one whom God has made great. And this man, instantly, by sheer innate power, shall win the fortune or the position coveted by his rivals. Whoever has had any experience of life has seen this happen a hundred times.

If we recapitulate, it comes to this. The first element of longevity is the Idea ; the second, Independence ; the third, Indolence. Keep the spirit open to all impressions ; avoid all unnecessary connexions, political or otherwise ; learn to be lazy. These things achieved, you may make a mark on the world ; you will certainly enjoy life ; you may possibly live so long as to be an archæological curiosity.

Idea . . . Independence . . . Indolence—a modern triad. They combine the two mysteries of happiness and longevity—whereof the latter depends on the former. Look at it. A constant current of ideas keeps the brain joyous and resourceful. A perfect spirit of

independence makes a man devoid of fear, and enables him to walk erect, not only among poets and philosophers, but among Kings and Emperors and other inferior persons. And a knowledge of what indolence means has a two-fold delight, for it enables a man to live voluptuously while he is thinking profoundly . . . allows the pearl to ripen in the oyster while the oyster enjoys itself and absorbs iodine and bromine.

I do not profess to have proved that a man can live as long as he pleases. I will not deny it : the soul's influence on the body is miraculous, and it may be more scientifically directed. What I think obvious is that men who have many ideas, an isolated position, and a capacity for enjoying existence, are likely to live long. We know that the soul reproduces the body in a higher form : knowing this, let us live the ideal independent indolent life. This done, we may claim and obtain our Century.

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